

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Regional office, area office, or other location of the Meat Grading and Certification Branch, Livestock and Seed Division. The Branch provides voluntary grading and certification services for meat and meat products, and the incumbent is technically responsible for conducting meat acceptance services in a designated area under the supervision of a journeyman meat grader or supervisor.

II. DUTIES

Examines the trim, freshness, size, weight, packaging, and other specification requirements for meat and meat food products to determine their conformance with approved specification and contract requirements.

Selects representative samples of meat and/or meat products for analysis using official random sampling procedures to determine if products are in compliance with approved specifications. When applicable, prepares and forwards such samples to specified laboratories for chemical analysis and prepares and maintains related reports on production, laboratory analysis results, and shipping data.

Applies designated and approved certification stamps to meat, meat products, and containers, which have been examined and accepted in accordance with specification requirements.

Corrects self-made errors and defends and explains certification determinations and the application of official specification and certification instructions, policies, and procedures.

Prepares and issues Agricultural Products Acceptance Certificates which cover the certification services provided to meat packing and processing plants. Determines the charges to be made for work performed and completes work reports and administrative and fiscal documents.

III. EVALUATION FACTORS

A. Knowledge Required by the Position. Fundamental knowledge of the characteristics, anatomical structure, types of cuts, and processing techniques for a limited variety of meats to perform simple and routine acceptance assignments and to further develop knowledge and skills through on-the-job training. The ability to learn the official acceptance standards, regulations, and procedures.

B. Supervisory Controls. The supervisor makes the plant assignments, generally on a daily basis, and defines the assignment objectives and determines work priorities. In cases where the assignment is of a continuing nature, the work objectives have been previously well- defined and the incumbent refers only unusual deviations from the general assignment for supervisory assistance. During the assignment, technical assistance is available for technical problems relating to the acceptance work.

The work is closely reviewed. The preparation of certificates, work reports, and other records are checked for overall conformance with accepted practices, and technical proficiency is checked.

C. Guidelines. Guidelines include various official specifications for meat and meat products, purchase orders and contracts, technical and procedural instructions and notices, and oral supervisory instructions. The incumbent adheres closely to the guidelines and instructions. Borderline cases and/or situations not directly covered are referred to a supervisor or journeyman grader for classification or determination.

D. Complexity. The work consists of a variety of duties including interpretation of specifications; sampling meat and meat products; examining meat for varying contract specifications; and inspecting meat and meat products for general compliance, proper storage, and transportation requirements. The procedures and methods used vary according to the duties being performed, as do the pertinent factors to be considered. Technical factors to be considered are generally apparent and readily verified.

E. Scope and Effect. The work involves applying specifications and regulations to determine the acceptability of meat and meat food products. These determinations directly affect the product's market value and, consequently, the economic interests of producers, processors, wholesalers, governmental agencies and departments, and institutions.

F. Personal Contacts. Contacts include Agricultural Commodity Graders (Meat), USDA Meat Inspectors, other Federal and State Governmental personnel, consumers, and industry personnel including company graders, department supervisors, and production managers.

G. Purpose of Contacts. The purpose is to develop and maintain the cooperation of plant employees, to explain determinations and Agency policies and regulations, and to exchange information to plan and schedule work activities. Questions and problems are routinely referred to a journeyman grader or supervisor for resolution.

H. Physical Demands. The work requires long periods of standing and some lifting of heavy cartons. The work also includes periods of continually stamping cuts of meat and cartons.

I- Work Environment. The work environment includes exposure, to the cold temperature of coolers (25 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit) and other processing areas; the high noise levels of industrial processing equipment; the risks of forklifts, meat hooks, and/or meat products,

and other items moving or falling; slippery floors and stairs; and the risks of cutting and sawing equipment.